Hold up Your End

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Hold up Your End

by barcharonte

Summary

Will wants to see what Abigail has on her phone, Hannibal wants them to keep their promises, and Beau just wants to know if everyone is alright.

A snapshot from their lives in France.

Notes

I decided to turn Clearest Warning into a series, and add to it whenever the fluff muse struck. He struck suddenly and with such urgency that I dropped everything to get this down. This is the first installment. Have fun!

Hey!

Will sighed at the curt exclamation for the umpteenth time. Before he wisened up and put a lock on his phone, Abigail had recorded herself and set the soundbite as his default notification sound. He heard her yell at him for countless times a day, and when she was cross with him, she was known to send blank messages to him at rapid succession.

“You could change it,” came Hannibal’s voice, from where he was sitting at his armchair, legs crossed, seemingly engrossed in whatever he was reading in his tablet. *Probably the Tattle Crime equivalent of French journals*, Will thought fondly.

“I know,” he replied. He could change it, but he did not. Not because he liked it, but because he couldn’t be bothered. It had nothing to do with Abigail’s smirk whenever he received a message while she was in the room.

His latest message read: *Abby hasnt responded in 4 hrs. Check her n let me know*.

“It’s dad,” Will said, sitting up from where he was lounging on the obscenely soft and wide sofa, the light, fluffy blanket pooling on his lap. “Says 'Abby' hasn’t been responding to him.”

“She’s been in her room since dinner.” Hannibal scrolled down a bit. *Checking the comments*, Will knew. Their latest display was pulling quite the crowd.

“We’ll see, won’t we,” Will murmured, and got up to go check on Abigail. Whoever said he was not her father -including Abigail herself when she felt like being contrary- was a filthy fucking liar.

He was careful not to make a sound when he opened the door to Abigail’s room, and mentally congratulated himself for the precaution when he found her asleep. She had her own double bed, and was laying in the middle of it right now, face down and half on top of what Will knew was Hannibal’s copy of *Paradise Lost*. Hannibal had managed to get her interested in reading it by telling her that the book had been banned by the church, but had neglected to say that it happened in the 18th century. It was not exactly a riveting read for a 19-year-old young woman.

Will flinched slightly when he saw that a couple of pages were ripped along the inner edges. Very carefully, he rescued it from beneath her arm, and tried to see if the tears were noticeable when the book was closed. His final verdict was that no, it was not noticeable to a normal person, but to an obsessive maniac, it might as well have a neon sign on it. Will left the book on her bedside drawer next to her phone, wishing the book had been a recent print so they could have replaced it before Hannibal sent Abigail that look of devastated disappointment, but alas, it was ancient and this one was entirely on her.

The phone was plugged in, but the green light on the top corner told him it was done charging. Gingerly, he unplugged it and as he stood there by her bed, holding the thing, he came to the sudden realization that if there ever was a chance to see what Abigail had on her vault of a phone, this was it.

Will opened the screen to find himself brought short by a fingerprint lock screen. He should have expected this. Not entirely disheartened yet, he looked at the evidence again.

Phone: Locked. Abigail: Asleep. Breaths: Deep, steady. Eyeballs: Moving rapidly beneath the lids. REM sleep: Hardest time to wake from sleep; if awoken, will be groggy and suggestible.

Gotcha.

Will reached, cautious and alert, for her dominant right hand. It was curled over her head and limp with sleep, but Will only needed the forefinger, and just for a second. He adjusted the phone to the best angle, and reached with his free hand for the-

"Will."

The whisper made him freeze, hunched awkwardly over Abigail's sleeping form. He looked up to find Hannibal with his arms crossed and leaning against the doorframe. Hannibal had his lips rolled between his teeth, trying to suppress a grin. The only light source in the room was Abigail's reading lamp, and in the warm light, Hannibal's mirthful eyes looked black. He shook his head once. *Don't.*

Will's hand, suspended in the air, twitched. *But-*

Hannibal nodded in the direction of the study. *Come.*

Will straightened and put the phone back on the drawer, shoulders slumping. *Fine*.

Hannibal reached for his hand as Will approached, and upon taking it, led him back to the study. Instead of going back to his reading, Hannibal pushed and pulled Will until both were laying on the cloud sofa facing each other, the fluffy blanket covering them both. Hannibal's knowing gaze made Will close his eyes and burrow farther into the cushions.

"I was just going to take one look," he said defensively, but didn't object when Hannibal reached to stroke his hair.

"She trusts us. She trusts you," Hannibal said softly. Will opened one eye to look at him in disbelief.

"Who are you and what have you done with my Hannibal?" His quip was met with a short but forceful exhale from the nose, indicating amusement as well as a reluctance to grant that with an answer.

"We did agree to respect each other's privacy. Unanimously, I might add." The reminder that Hannibal gave due regard to their decisions was heart-warming, but not enough.

"Why don't you tell her that? And it's easy for you to say. It's not your father she sends pictures of us together," Will said, tilting his head a bit to allow Hannibal's hand easier access. The couch, the blanket, the soft light from the fireplace, the fingers in his hair, and Hannibal, so close and warm and right there, were getting to him.

“No, it’s not,” Hannibal admitted. “But I don’t think Beau minds. Remember, they have a deal, and it was sealed before ours was. He really must want the pictures.”

“Gross,” Will said, shifting closer to Hannibal and smiling when he felt Hannibal shift closer as well. “A deal also means reciprocity, though god knows what dad’s part of the deal is.”

“Whatever it is, love, it has yet to cause any problems. I wouldn’t worry about it,” Hannibal said, his breath on Will’s forehead as he spoke.

“Still,” Will mumbled. “We should stop kissing outside the bedroom. We’re tempting fate.”

“It sounds weak to you, even as you say it,” Hannibal said, and kissed the bridge of Will’s nose.

“Yeah,” Will sighed, settling into the warm space they created, ready to call it a night right then and there. “Not gonna happen.” Hannibal took his hand from Will’s hair so he could wrap the arm around-

Hey!

“Argh,” Will said eloquently, and fished out his phone from where it had slipped into the crease between two cushions.

Is she ok? Are you ok? Will?

“Now he’s worried about me too,” Will murmured. He began typing, and Hannibal turned to lay on his back, hands on his chest, fingers entwined.

“At least Abigail assures him when they communicate, so you don’t have to,” Hannibal said.

She’s fine. Fell asleep reading. I’m fine too. Going to bed now. Night, dad. Will hit send, and turned to regard Hannibal with suspicion. He soon found his answer.

“You’re curious,” Will said, his phone once again forgotten as he turned to Hannibal fully. “You want to see what will happen if they keep the deal.”

“Yes,” was the unrepentant reply.

Will rolled his eyes, grabbed the entwined hands and tugged, indicating that Hannibal should rise. He got off the couch and started for their bedroom. “You’re saying that now, but one day, she will catch us *in flagrante delicto,* and it will be your bare ass that she sends to my father.”

“I like to live dangerously,” Hannibal said airily. “Also, I trust that Abigail has enough common sense to apply censorship if that ever happened."

“Her putting a laughing emoji on your ass is your failsafe, am I getting this right?”

Will, sleepy by now from lazing about in the sofa, got straight into bed upon entering the room. He was already in his pyjamas, but Hannibal thought pyjamas did not belong on his

person until immediately before bed. And so this was Will's favourite part of the day: watching from the bed as Hannibal took his clothes off. Sometimes he was quick and uncaring for the wellbeing of the clothes. Sometimes, he was torturously slow, revealing inch after inch in such sensuous languor that it drove Will mad. Tonight, he was moderate as he slid off his dark red cashmere sweater and -wonder of wonders- cream coloured cargo pants. Will daily thanked himself for demanding casual clothes at home, and Hannibal for keeping that promise.

"I was hoping she would use a peach emoji," Hannibal said, rudely jarring Will out of his appreciative musings. Will held his breath for a moment.

"This isn't going to work, Hannibal," he said on the exhale. "You have to decide: Are you up to date with teen jargon or are you not? You can't keep dropping these on me. I'll choke on something and die if you keep this up." At Hannibal's raised eyebrow, he added. "I deserve a more dignified death, at least."

"When you die, my love," Hannibal said, putting on his pyjama pants. "And if I have any say in this, you will be in bed just as you are now." He reached for a plain V-neck t-shirt Will liked seeing him in and put it on, his hair in disarray when he emerged. "You will be beautiful, just as you are right now." He walked to his side of the bed and got under the covers. "You will, however, be very wrinkly and have trouble moving without your muscles aching. You will probably also have problems with your urinary system, and might need to use a catheter or adult diapers." Hannibal turned his head to give him a big, self-satisfied grin. "But I will be right beside you, in a similar state."

Will covered his face with both hands. "Is this your way of saying we'll grow old and die together, you *fucking lunatic*?"

Hannibal lunged at Will, wrapping both arms around him and pulling until Will was snuggled up into him, limbs entangled and oh, so comfortable.

"Yes," Hannibal replied with a content sigh. "That's exactly what I'm saying. Although I do hope you lose that foul mouth sometime before then."

"Fuck you," Will said to Hannibal's chest, voice muffled.

"Could you repeat that, please? I couldn't hear you," Hannibal asked pointedly.

Will moved his head back a bit. "I said I love you," he said.

"So you did. And you know what, Will?"

"What?" Will looked up at him, apprehensive.

Eyes bright even in the dark of the room, Hannibal grinned down at Will. "I think that's lit af."

Will's laugh was sudden and loud, until it was drowned out by a hungry kiss.

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